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PRESENTS

ONLINE EXHIBIT – SPANISH GOVERNOR'S PALACE 2010

SPANISH GOVERNORS OF TEXAS

Martín de Alarcón	1716-1719
Joseph de Azlor	1719-1722
Fernando Perez de Almazan	1722-1727
Melchor de Media Villa y Azcona	1727-1730
Juan Antonio Bustillos y Ceballos	1730-1734
Manuel de Sandoval	1734-1736
Carols Benites Franquis de Lugo	1736-1737
Prudencio de Orobio y Basterra	1737-1741
Tomas Felipe Wintuisen	1741-1743
Justo Boneo y Morales	1743-1744
Francisco Garcia Larios	1744-1748
Pedro del Barrio Junco y Espriella	1748-1751
Jacinto de Barrios y Jauregui	1751-1759
Angel Martos y Navarrete	1759-1766
Hugo Oconor	1767-1770
Baron de Ripperda	1770-1778
Domingo Cabello	1778-1786
Bernardo Bonavia	1786-1786
Rafael Martinez Pacheco	1786-1788
Manuel Munoz	1790-1798
Jose Irigoyen	1798-1800
Juan Bautista de Elguezabal	1800-1805
Antonio Cordero y Bustamante	1805-1808
Manuel Maria de Salcedo	1808-1813
Juan Bautista Casas	1811
Cristobal Dominguez	1814-1817
Ignacio Perez	1817-1817
Manuel Pardo	1817-1817
Antonio Martinez	1817-1822

Spanish Governor's Palace Visitor Services Supervisor Charlotte A. Boord,
Assistant Director of Downtown Operations Colleen Swain, and
Dr. Felix D. Almarax, Jr. attend the re-opening of the Spanish Governor's Palace.

May 2, 2010

"Presidio San Antonio de Bexar: Spanish Bastion in Central Texas, 1718-1827"

by
Felix D. Almaraz, Jr., Ph.D.
Peter T. Flawn Distinguished University
Professor of Borderlands History
The University of Texas at San Antonio

Presented at the
Re-dedication Ceremony of the
Spanish Governors' Palace,
Sunday, May 2, 2010

"Presidio San Antonio de Bexar: Spanish Bastion

in Central Texas, 1718-1827"

by

Felix D. Almaraz, Jr., Ph.D.

In 1709, "the environment of fertile arable land, tall pecan trees and other vegetation, sources of sweet water, ample firewood for heating in winter and cooking year-round, and grass-covered *llanos*" along the Rio San Antonio impressed father-president of the Rio Grande missions Fray Antonio Olivares and commandant of Presidio San Juan Bautista del Rio Grande Captain Pedro de Aguirre. The religious and military leaders were conducting an exploratory tour for sites suitable for future spiritual foundations.

After this visit, Father Olivares began dispatching annual reports to his superiors recommending the establishment of a mission and a presidio adjacent to the Rio San Antonio. His dispatches bore fruit in 1717 when a new Viceroy, Marques de Valero took interest in his recommendations and requested an audience. The Marques de Valero was the second son of the Zuniga Guzman family from the ducal town of Bexar in the province of Salamanca. Viceroy Valero viewed a French visit to the Presidio San Juan Bautista from Natchitoches, Louisiana in 1714 as an impetus for expanding the Spanish presence in the borderlands of present-day Texas. Therefore, Viceroy Valero approved Father Olivares' proposal to build a mission and presidio along the Rio San Antonio and appointed a new executive for the region – Governor Martin Alarcon.

Fray's execution of his approved plan meant moving the existing mission along the banks of the Rio Grande to the banks of the Rio San Antonio. He founded Mission San Antonio de Valero at the headwaters of a creek named San Pedro. Later the foundation was relocated to a second site along the creek, and finally, in the 1730s, it was transferred across the Rio San Antonio where its record of progress became more notable amid the construction of permanent buildings, supported by productive farmlands and distant ranches with sizeable herds of livestock.

In 1720, Governor Marques de Aguayo arrived in Texas. He founded the San Jose y San Miguel de Aguayo, which would become the most impressive ecclesiastical outpost in the arc of the Spanish borderlands of North America. Under Aguayo, in 1729 fifteen families from the Canary Islands were recruited and transported to Texas in order to establish a local civil government. Then, on March 5, 1731, three East Texas missions were transferred to San Antonio. On March 9, 1731, the Canary Islands families arrived and on August 1st of that year formally inaugurated a municipal government with a parish church of San Fernando and a civic square called *Plaza de las Islas*.

In 1776, San Antonio de Bexar became the capital of Texas. When the new governor Baron de Ripperda arrived, he required proper accomodations – and stayed in the *capitania* – which is the present-day Spanish Governor's Palace. However, the idea of changing the status of the residence likely originated with Corporal Jose Mares, who traveled to San Antonio de Bexar from Santa Fe in 1787. By that time Governor Cabello resided in the Spanish capital. When Mares described the *Palacio de los Gobernadores* or *Casas Reales* in Santa Fe to Governor Cabello and other residents, it captured their imagination. On July 21, 1821, Colonel Antonio Martinez, the last Spanish governor of Texas commemorated Mexican independence with a military ceremony and a solemn Mass celebrated in the parish church of San Fernando. In 1827, Mexico downgraded the government into a department and created a dual state of Coahuila and Texas. The symbol of the governor's office went to Saltillo, and the folklore of the Governors' Palace reverted to its original *capitania* for the few remaining years of Mexican Texas.

Photographs of the Spanish Governor's Palace after it had fallen into disrepair in the early twentieth century.
Note the eagle-plate which remained over time as businesses came and went.

ca. 1911-1920

Courtesy San Antonio Public Library Texana/Genealogy

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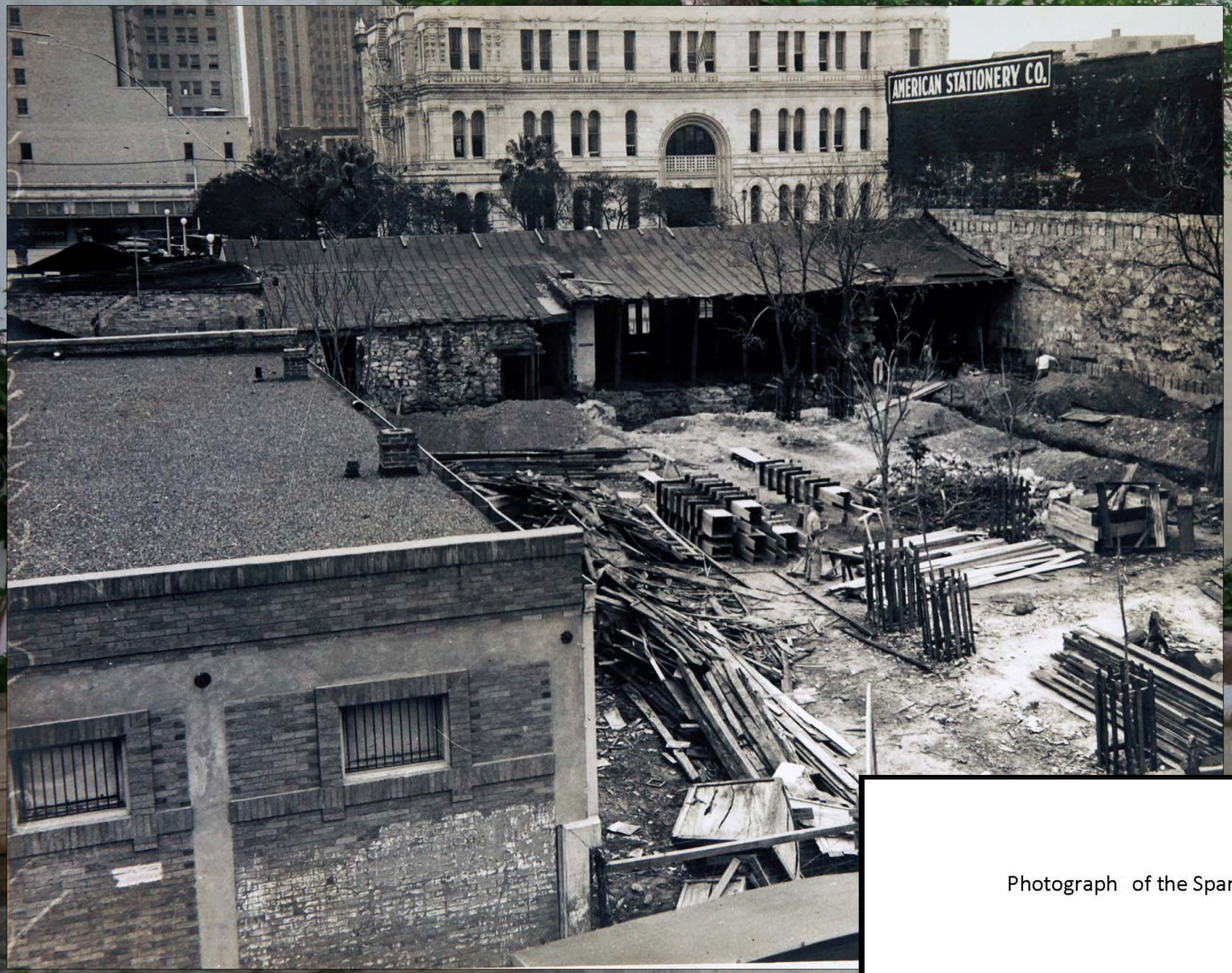


Photograph of the Spanish Governor's Palace during construction.

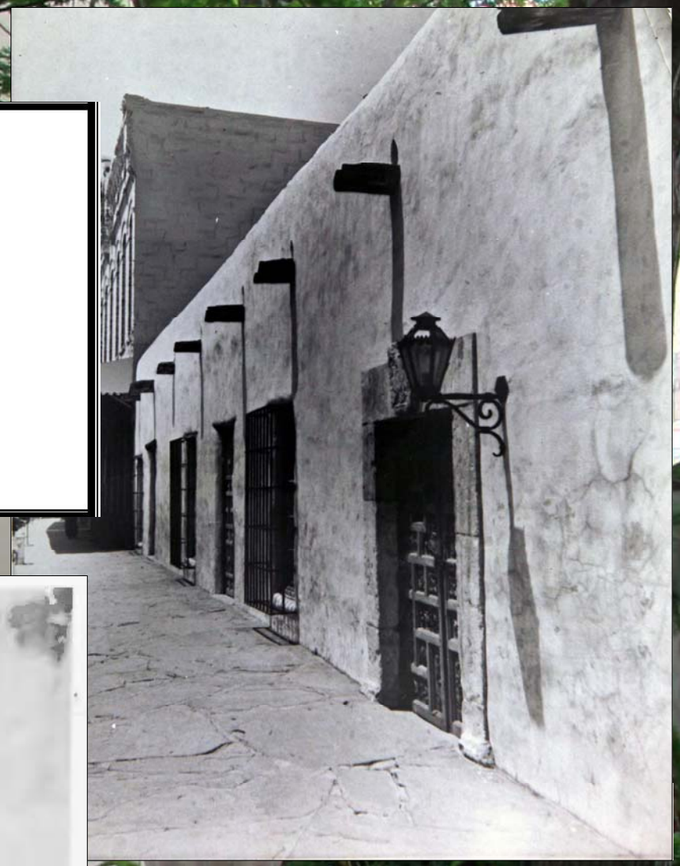
1930

Courtesy San Antonio Public Library Texana/Genealogy

Photographs of the Spanish Governor's Palace after construction.

1930

Courtesy San Antonio Public Library Texana/Genealogy



The Historic Context of local architecture from the City of San Antonio's Strategic Historic Preservation Plan, adopted by City Council Resolution. The Spanish Governor's Palace features prominently in this section as a unique representative of architecture from the Spanish Colonial Period.

August 20, 2009

City Architecture and Historic Resources

In the preface to the 1986 edition of the *Guide to San Antonio's Architecture*, the editors assert, in a rather emphatic manner, that San Antonio's architecture is imbued with a unique, "epic" dimension, one that is not found nor measured in any other major American city. "Epic" is one word to describe the profound uniqueness of the architectural and archaeological resources that have been preserved and maintained over the decades by the citizens of San Antonio, such as the Alamo and the other Missions that are physical testaments to the birth of the City.

Mission Concepcion

Mission San Juan

Alternatively, perhaps it is the dramatic forces of history that have transformed the City from its early settlement as a frontier military and missionary outpost to a modern metropolis of almost 1.4 million people that best reflects the epic quality of San Antonio's architecture and built resources. For others, it is the diverse, exotic amalgam of nations and cultures — Hispanic, German, French, American - the people that settled and developed San Antonio that should be celebrated in the preservation of significant architectural and archaeological resources. Still, many more believe it is the craftsmanship and distinctiveness of the architectural design itself, perhaps a high-style Victorian house in the King William Historic District for example, that contributes to the City's significant architecture.

Regardless of how one defines the epic qualities of San Antonio's historic resources, there is no question that the story of San Antonio can only be experienced and understood through the homes, commercial buildings, churches, institutions and archaeological resources that have remained through the decades with the citizens of San Antonio.

San Antonio's story begins in the late 17th century with the exploration of the San Antonio River area by Spanish explorers and missionaries, an area that was once called Yanaguana — "refreshing waters" by the Native Americans in the region. In 1691, the Teran Expedition accompanied by Father Damian Mazanet named the river and place in honor of San Antonio de Padua after the Saint Anthony of Padova, Italy. In 1718, Spanish missionaries and soldiers who accompanied the Alarcon Expedition established the first mission and presidio in the area of San Pedro Springs. Since its settlement, San Antonio has been shaped by several design influences and historical forces that have contributed to its overall urban form and architecture. These influences can be summarized according to the following contexts:

- Settlement and the Spanish Colonial Period
- The Gilded Age
- Early 20th Century Urbanism
- Expansion and Modernism

Mission Espada

Spanish Governor's Palace

LaVillita

Settlement + Spanish Colonial Period

Soon after the establishment of the first site of the Mission of San Antonio de Valero, known today as the Alamo, the soldiers constructed a presidio near the site, which was later relocated to what is now Military Plaza and built permanent structures including the captain's quarters, later known as the Spanish Governor's Palace, to protect the settlement from incursions and raids from the frontier. Mission San Jose y San Miguel de Aguayo (San Jose) was founded two years later, and in 1731 three other missions, Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña, San Juan Capistrano, and San Francisco de la Espada were relocated from East Texas to Christianize the native population. Mission San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo) was moved to its third and final location in 1724 at what is now known as Alamo Plaza.

In 1731, the settlement of San Antonio gained royal "villa" status with the arrival of 56 Canary Islanders, settlers who represented the first civilians to arrive in the community. San Antonio itself was planned according to the famous Laws of the Indies, which was used by the Spanish to guide the development of their cities around plazas, presidios, and narrow grid streets. However, due to the lands already owned and controlled by the missions and presidio, and the presence of the San Antonio River and San Pedro Creek, the actual plan had to be adjusted to fit within the available space, resulting in a somewhat altered configuration. Much of the grid street system is still in evidence today.

Over the next century, the fledgling settlement of Spanish soldiers, priests, civilians and Native American converts endured the rigors and travails of the frontier and the political struggles of rival communities and empires. However, despite these circumstances, San Antonio grew to a community of over 2,000 people and became the most important Spanish settlement in Texas with its elevation to a Spanish provincial capital. San Antonio's Spanish Colonial period ended in 1821 when Mexico won its independence from Spain and San Antonio remained under Mexican rule until the Texas War for Independence in 1836 and the famous Battles of the Alamo and San Jacinto.

Significant historic resources from the Spanish Colonial period include the five extant Spanish Missions, the Governor's Palace, San Pedro Springs Park, the second oldest municipal park in the United States, the acequia systems and a corresponding aqueduct, and La Villita, the "old Spanish town", of which the Cos House (c. 1800) is the only extant building from the Spanish settlement period. The Missions flourished mostly in the mid-1700s but experienced decline and abandonment in succeeding decades as raids from neighboring Indian tribes and diseases reduced the Missions' population. Additionally, by the late 18th century,

much of the Native American population was acculturated into the existing Hispanic population. Constructed largely of native limestone and detailed with highly ornamental doors, vaulted ceilings, and bell towers, four of the five Missions continue to be operating parishes of the San Antonio Catholic Archdiocese. Acequias, man-made waterways and canals, were also constructed as part of the Mission complex to distribute water for farming purposes. Today, the Missions Concepcion, San Jose, San Juan and Espada comprise the San Antonio Mission National Historical Park, which was authorized by the US Congress in 1978. The Alamo is owned by the State of Texas and is operated by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

San Fernando Cathedral

Other resources of the Spanish Colonial period include Alamo Plaza, which was the Mission Valero's formerly enclosed courtyard, and Military Plaza, the drilling ground of the Presidio de Bexar. Main Plaza, or Plaza de las Islas, as it was originally named, was the scene of several historic events including the signing of a peace treaty with the Apache Indians in 1749. The Spanish Governor's Palace, a flat-roofed structure constructed in stone and adobe, was completed in 1749, was purchased from descendants of the last ad interim Spanish Governor of Texas and restored by the City of San Antonio in 1928. San Fernando Cathedral, located along Main Plaza, was constructed in 1738 by the original Canary Islanders and completed in 1758. The Cathedral was completely rebuilt around 1868 in the Gothic Revival style although the original sanctuary walls were retained, making it one of the oldest Roman Catholic sanctuaries in the United States.

The Gilded Age

After the Texas War of Independence and the State's admission into the Union in 1845, the City of San Antonio began to grow with an influx of immigrants from Germany and Mexico and other ethnic groups ranging from French, Italian, English, Irish, among others as well as other Americans from the east. Post American Civil War, the City of San Antonio became a center for trade for the South Texas region and the old Spanish city center, comprising the Alamo, the plazas and the radiating streets, began to grow and prosper.

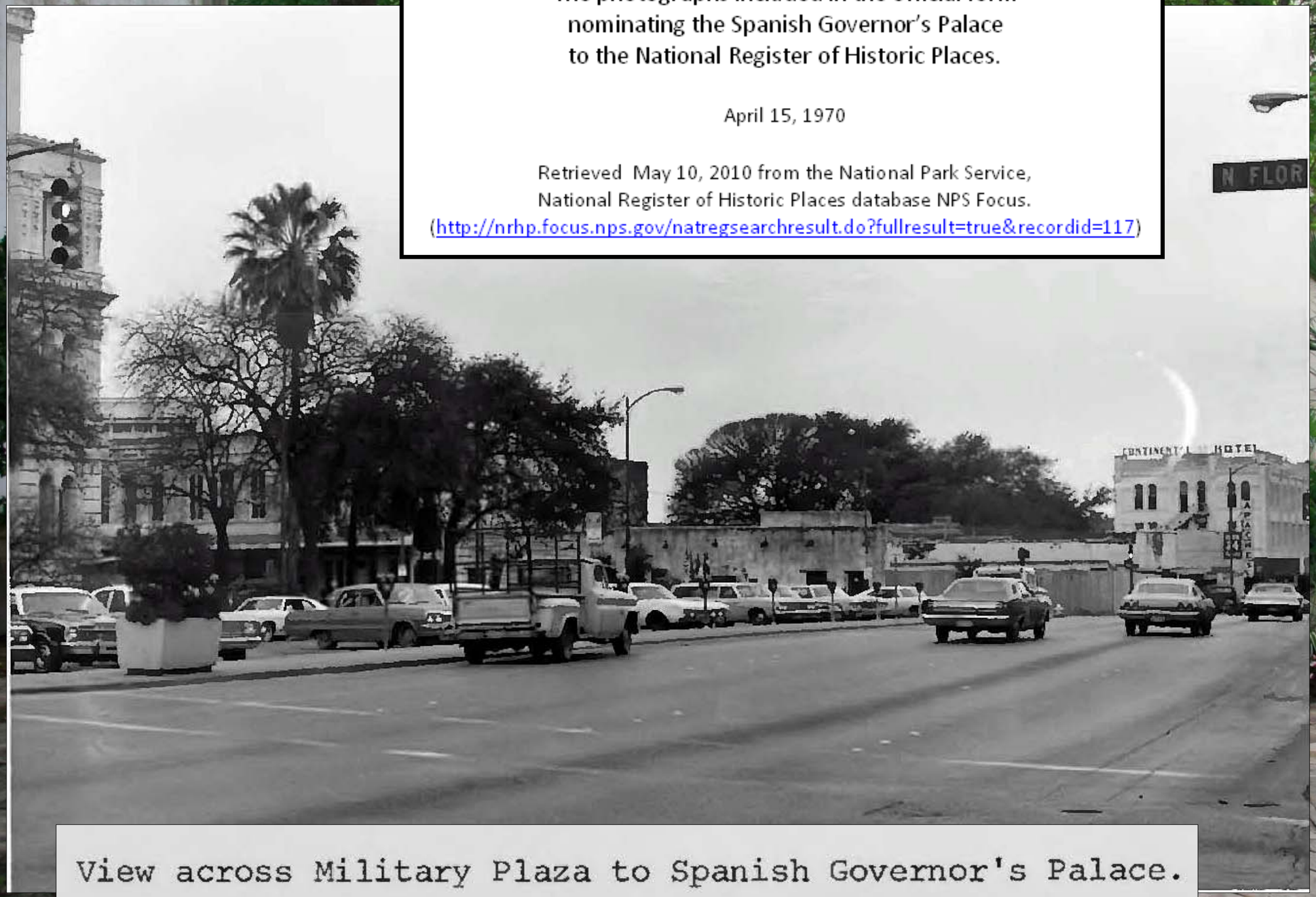
Resources from the King William Historic District.

Commerce and Houston Streets became important retail streets and in the 1840s and 50s, German and other immigrants began to settle and develop adjacent neighborhood residential areas such as Lavaca. The King William neighborhood developed into one of the most fashionable residential areas of the city, with homes designed and constructed in the high Italianate and Greek Revival styles for wealthy merchants and businessmen. The King William district would later become the first

The photographs included in the official form nominating the Spanish Governor's Palace to the National Register of Historic Places.

April 15, 1970

Retrieved May 10, 2010 from the National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places database NPS Focus. (http://nrhp.focus.nps.gov/natregsearchresult.do?fullresult=true&recordid=117)



View across Military Plaza to Spanish Governor's Palace.

Front facade of Governor's Palace.

View of principal door, from the east

Original door.

Stairs, Spanish Governor's Palace.

Patio, Spanish Governor's Palace.

View of patio (interior courtyard)

Gardens, pebbled courtyard, Spanish Governor's Palace.

Downtown Operations Website:
http://www.sanantonio.gov/dtops/parks_plazas/governorspalace.aspx

Spanish Governor's Palace

On April 15th, the Spanish Governor's Palace re-opened after being closed for a Capital Improvements project. With funding from the 2007 Bond Election, we were able to make improvements to the building which included a new roofing system and the installation of new electrical service to the building and courtyard.

We hope you will join us for our Grand Re-Opening Celebration on May 2, 2010.

Please continue to visit our webpage and our Facebook page for more information about the Palace and upcoming events.

105 Military Plaza
San Antonio, TX 78205
(210) 224-0601

Hours of Operation:
Tuesday- Saturday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sundays, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Admission:
Adults - $4.00
Military/Seniors - $3.00
Children ages 7 - 13, $2.00
Children under seven - Free

To learn more about the Spanish Governor's Palace click o

- Rental Information
- Spanish Governor's Palace History
- Legend of the Doors
- Visit our Facebook page
- Additional Pictures of the Spanish Governor's Palace: Courtyard | Fountai

Spanish Governor's Palace: History

This National Historic Landmark represents the last visual vestiges of the Presidio San Antonio de Bejar. The Spanish Governor's Palace, constructed at this location in the early 18th century and restored in the 1930's, is furnished with Spanish Colonial period pieces and features a beautiful, hand-carved wooden door at the entrance.

The keystone above the front entrance is marked with the coat-of-arms of Spanish King Ferdinand VI and the inscription 'año 1749 se acabo' suggesting construction of the Presidio was completed in 1749.

Traditionally known as the Spanish Governor's Palace, this building was the original Commandancia (residence and working office) for the Captain of the Presidio. After the threat of French encroachment in East Texas was gone, King Carlos III appointed the Marquis de Rubí inspector of frontier presidios. Rubí's inspection resulted in the Royal Regulations of 1772 that ordered the capital of Spanish Texas be moved from the Presidio at Los Adaes, east of Nacogdoches, Texas, to the Presidio de San Antonio de Béjar. Rubí's orders also stipulated that the captain of the presidio at Béjar serve as Governor of Texas.

By the time Spain lost control of Mexico and Texas in 1821, the Presidio had ceased to function as a military post. However its owner and former captain Ignacio Perez and his descendants continued to use the building as a residence through the mid-1800s. The building's function changed from residential to commercial in the mid-1870s and through the 1920s it housed a variety of businesses including a pawn shop, a wholesale produce store, saloons, and a clothing store.

The City of San Antonio purchased the property in 1928 and completed the restoration between 1929 and 1930. Currently maintained by the Downtown Operations Department of the City of San Antonio, the building serves as a museum and the beautiful courtyards can be reserved for special occasions.

We invite you to learn why the National Geographic Society has called the landmark "the most beautiful building in San Antonio".

"State of Historic Preservation" Address and Press Event

Join Mayor Castro, City Council members, and the Office of Historic Preservation on Tuesday, May 4th at 12:30 in the courtyard of the Spanish Governor's Palace. They will highlight the importance of historic preservation and central city reinvestment. Refreshments will be provided by District 1 Councilwoman Cisneros' office.

Spanish Governor's Palace Grand Reopening Celebration

Please join
The City of San Antonio
for a
Grand Reopening Celebration of the
Spanish Governor's Palace
announcing the completion of
the Capital Improvements Project

Sunday, May 2, 2010
1:00 - 4: 00 pm
Spanish Governor's Palace
105 Plaza de Armas

1:00 - Welcoming Remarks with
Guest Speaker Dr. Felix Almaraz, Jr.
1:30 - Refreshments (sponsored by Marti's)
1:45 - Dance performances by the
Spanish Cultural Society

Children's activities during the event

Celebration Sponsored by:

Downtown Operations

and

Marti's

http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic/Docs/Events/Special_Issue_News_Letter.pdf - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by City of

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The Historic Preservation Officer for the City of San Antonio gave a "State of Historic Preservation" Address at the Re-Opening of the Spanish Governor's Palace on May 5, 2010.

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION san antonio

A Message from our Historic Preservation Officer

Preservation Month 2010

In honor of **National Preservation Month** the City of San Antonio's Office of Historic Preservation is hosting several events throughout the month of May. National Preservation Month was started by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1971. The celebration was originally a week long, annual event that has expanded into a month filled with ceremonies, tours, and events aimed at promoting historic preservation. This year the Office of Historic Preservation, along with many partner organizations including the San Antonio Conservation Society, Villa Finale, the Missions National Historical Park, Southwest School of Art and Craft, UTSA College of Architecture, San Antonio Museum of Art, Downtown Alliance, Downtown Operations, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Los Compadres, is providing many opportunities for people to celebrate the unique heritage that our city has to offer.

The month will kick off with the "State of Historic Preservation" Address and Press Event at the newly re-opened Spanish Governor's Palace on Tuesday, May 4th, at 12:30 pm. The Mayor and several City Council members will join us to highlight the importance of historic preservation and central city reinvestment to San Antonio. That is just the beginning! With architectural running tours, networking events, a scavenger hunt, the *This Place Matters* photo and video contest, another hands-on window workshop, and the first childrens preservation race event, there is something for everyone to enjoy for sure.

I'd like to thank our Preservation Month sponsors: District One Councilwoman Mary Alice Cisneros, Steelhouse Lofts, and King William Realty. There's still time to become a sponsor or donate prizes for Preservation Month activities as well! Please contact us if you're interested in helping us promote Preservation Month.

I'm very excited about everything we have planned and look forward to seeing you at many of our events!

Shanon

Shanon Wasielewski,
Historic Preservation Officer

"State of Historic Preservation" Address and Press Event

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2010 Preservation Month Downtown Architectural Feature Scavenger Hunt

The Office of Historic Preservation along with Downtown Alliance will celebrate National Preservation Month by introducing the first annual Architectural Feature Scavenger Hunt. The *Hunt* includes 20 unique architectural

This Place Matters

One of the ways the Office of Historic Preservation has chosen to celebrate National Preservation Month is to encourage local participation in the *This Place Matters* campaign of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. (http://www.preservationnation.org/take-action/this-place-matters/).

This Place Matters showcases the diverse places that matter to all of us. People from across the country are honoring their favorite places, making a call to protect, enhance, and enjoy the places that matter.

We want to encourage the citizens of San Antonio to call attention to the places that matter to them. In addition to submitting them to the NTHP, we are encouraging people to submit photos to us at ohp@sanantonio.gov This year we will be hosting a local photo contest as well (Councilman Clamp has agreed to serve as one of the celebrity judges!) and a *Why This Place Matters* video

THIS PLACE MATTERS™

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